



# The Mystical Forest



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## Chapter 1 by Aaron Hartmann

I know this place where anything can happen. Where your dreams can become reality. Follow the hidden path and you might just find it.

## Chapter 2 by Emily



Maggie grew up listening to the stories, the old tales passed down generations. She also remembers being told that dreams should stay inside your head, where they belong. Her grandmother believed in the old ways. She didn't want any part dealing with a land where magic and spells were possible. They were, in her eyes, foolish and childish and dangerous. Any talk about spells and dreams turned her sour.

"Some things were never meant to be," she would warn. "It's not your place to be playing with things that should be left alone."

Maggie listened to her grandmother. She was old, which meant she was wise. But when Jordan Gallow showed up to Maggie's house with an old map, how was she supposed to deny the existence of such a place?

## Chapter 3 by Skeld



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when suddenly, out of the corner of her eye, she caught a glimpse of a boy.

In the fog, the boy was only a silhouette, still and motionless, Maggie started to get tense. She placed the book aside and stood up to confront the ghostly figure. She was about to shout, when the figure started to move. The boy was surprisingly quick. He had already crossed the street before Maggie could even blink twice. He came up to her and smiled. It was a warm smile, full of comfort and friendliness. Maggie found herself smiling back despite her best efforts not to. The boy had a strange charm to him. His face was deathly pale and his eyes were piercingly blue. He looked like something out of a fairy tale grandma used to tell all the time. Grandma! she thought, I should call her, when suddenly the boy said, "Hello, Margaret". His voice was very mature for his age. "How...how do you know my name?!" Maggie asked terrified. The boy smiled again and said "Well, we've met before haven't we?" "Did we?" she said bleakly.

"Yes, and you already know my name, don't you?" he said calmly.

"Jor...Jordan. Jordan Gallow?" she said, she could not even recognize the boy, yet she still knew his name.

The boy beamed and said "That's me. Hey! listen Maggie, wanna know a

secret that nobody knows?"

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His eyes had a certain mischief in them. "Yes Jordan said nervously.

"Well then, I got this map in my pocket and it was a map to a hidden treasure."

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to a magical and wondrous place. And the best part is, that place is right in the middle of the woods behind your house. Want to go there and hang out?" he said.

Maggie found herself in his grip. She was nothing if not a sucker for adventure in the woods. But she also had to take leave of Grandma.

It would be rude if she went out unannounced. Grandma would be very cross with her. She turned to go inside the house, when the boy put his hand on her shoulder, she looked back and saw he was holding a map.

She was mesmerized by the map. It shone like a lamp in the dark, the boy suddenly placed the map in her hand and grinned. She grinned back and immediately, they were both running off to the woods.

They came to the place marked X and found that it led to a small cabin, Jordan smiled and said "Come with me", taking her hand. They both reached the cabin and celebrated excitedly at their accomplishment.

Jordan opened the door and to Maggie's surprise, she saw that there was nothing in the cabin. The roof was bent down and the walls were almost withering. She gave Jordan a sharp look but, he only grinned his wonderful

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seen that earlier?" He only smiled at that replied, "You have to believe in magic for it to appear." Then suddenly, he pushed her into the water.

#### Chapter 4 by Brendan Parker



Her heart stopped as the icy cold water closed in around her. "Jordan!" She shouted, before her head slipped under the surface, along with the rest of her. She closed her eyes and held her breath, but as she became fully immersed in the pool a strange sensation came over her. She felt her entire body flipping around, as if gravity was suddenly pulling her from the opposite direction. And the water- it no longer felt wet at all.

Tentatively she opened her eyes. All around her was a bluish haze. She looked down, and saw her dress swaying loosely around her. A school of fish darted between her legs. Beneath that, she couldn't see anything except more blue.

Suddenly there was an explosion of bubbles to her right, and she looked over to see Jordan's body appearing next to her, only inverted- his feet coming first. Then, as his entire body came into view, he suddenly did a flip, so he appeared to be upright to her. He turned and looked her in the eyes.

He must have realized Maggie was in discomfort, as he made a concerned face. She was no less concerned herself- her lungs were beginning to burn from holding her breath for so long. Her eyes began to dart around, not sure of which direction she had to swim to reach the surface. Suddenly she felt Jordan wrap his hand around her wrist. Her eyes met his once again. He motioned with his other hand, bringing his open palm up past his chest, and at the same time, flaring his nostrils. She realized he wanted her to breathe. She shook her head.

Even though she felt more like she was floating in space than in water, she couldn't bring herself to do it. She knew if she breathed in and there really was liquid around her, she would drown. Spots began to fill her vision. Jordan motioned again, more urgently this time. Everything was going black for her.

As she passed out, she felt Jordan wrapping his arms around her. The last thing she saw before she was unconscious was the endless expanse of blue.

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Inside the blue.

Some parts of her whispered that it wasn't possible, other parts raised their hands and yelled that it was magic. Magic!

A dully logical part of her realized that this is what Jordan was trying to say.

Fish darted through her floating hair, so much prettier here. Everything was prettier here.

And Jordan...

He looked alive, somehow. He smiled now, pointing down.

Maggie slowly craned her head, taking in every detail. Small anemones swayed, floating on small bubbles of rock. Further 'down' jellyfish swam, but they swam downwards. Tall... trees? They spread, tall and thin until they branched out like roots on both sides. A magical forest beneath this water-like swirl.

Everything was flipped and it made Maggie laugh, small bubbles escaping from her mouth.

'What is this place' she wanted to ask, but wasn't sure if that would do anything. Jordan hadn't spoken earlier, so she assumed that speaking would not work.

Jordan gestured for her to follow, and she did, kicking, smiling.

She didn't think to look around and make sure she could get back out.

## Chapter 6 by Joanna Marie



Jordan motioned for Maggie to hold his hand, to make sure she wouldn't get lost. Everything turned a golden hue when a tiny pale hand met a dark one, and they floated together- no- flied together to a distant tunnel.

In the opening ahead, Maggie could see what appeared to be a purple sky.

They made it to the tunnel, which was no longer surrounded by water. They were completely dry. Jordan turned to her hands.

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"This is only the journey."

"What makes this forest so special?"

She questioned, not able to pool her eyes away from their hands, and she saw when the golden light was coming from. Out

of their locked hands, a golden strand of something, almost hairlike but made of pure light, weaved between their fingers.

"Because, this forest is special. It's magic. In this forest, anything can happen. Here, look at the map," he replied. Maggie didn't see the map anywhere. "Well? What are you waiting for? Imagine the map and it will appear, right before your eyes."

Maggie closed her eyes and pictured the map she had seen, and suddenly she could see it. It was almost as though the image was inside her mind and projecting from her eyes in front of her. She couldn't believe it was there, but she reached out to it anyway with her free hand. The golden glow was slowly turning brighter between their connected ones.

They were almost there, just a few more places to stop. However the next stop was fascinating- a field of pure purple. Amethyst grass, lavender sky, eggplant flowers, plum trees, orchid butterflies.

"Why purple?" Maggie asked, puzzled. She had nothing against purple, in fact, she found that color quite soothing, but she just found it odd that a whole place would be entirely purple.

"Oh, well it's my favorite color!" Jordan responded, "What's yours?"

"Oh, um, green I think."

"Lovely! So, shall we go?" Jordan asked, one corner of his mouth curled up into a crooked smile.

"Yes! I think so," Maggie replied.

"Great! Let's be off then!"

And at that moment the golden light got so intensely bright, Maggie had to close her eyes temporarily so she wouldn't blind herself. When she opened her eyes again, however, they weren't in the tunnel anymore.

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